



THE WORKING CLASS

MONTHLY JOURNAL OF THE CITU

Com. Mohd. Ismail

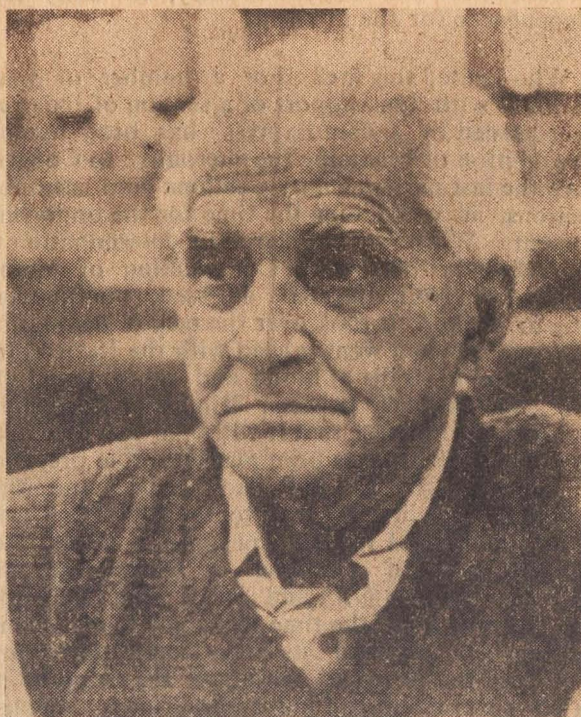
The Centre of Indian Trade Unions expresses its deep sorrow at the passing away of Com. Mohd. Ismail, the senior most vice President of the CITU, and the President of the West Bengal State Committee of CITU and one of the most prominent Trade Union leaders of the country. Com. Ismail breathed his last on 14 Nov. at Calcutta. He was 80.

Com. Ismail has left behind a great heritage of valour & organisational acumen. His simple way of life, his soft spokenness endeared him to everyone who came in his contact. He was one of those great leaders of the Indian Working Class movement who joined the movement from the class itself and remained amongst them. He had great skill of combining the Working Class movement with the movement of the peasantry, specially the poor peasantry.

Born in a landless peasant family of Unnao, Uttar Pradesh, in 1910, the entire life of Comrade Ismail was an example of untiring struggle. Fighting with utter poverty he shifted to Calcutta for a livelihood alongwith his elder brother when he was just 13.

Comrade Ismail started his political life through participating in the Khilafat movement mobilising the muslim masses in great numbers. He began Working for the Communist Party & became its member in 1935. Thereafter Comrade Ismail fully dedicated his life to the building up of a strong working class movement. Com. Ismail was imprisoned several times by the British and Congress Govt. during the working class & political struggles. He played a historic role in organising the tram workers, he played the role of one of the chief organisers of the Jute Workers Strikes in the 30's & 40's. He instilled confidence and self respect among such unorganised sections as 'bidi' workers and simultaneously led a contingent of the railway workers' movement also. By the forties he gained the recognition of being one of the most popular leader of the militant working class and was elected

to the Calcutta Municipal Corporation as a communist Candidate in 1945.



In 1948 Comrade Ismail was elected to the Central Committee of the undivided party. He was a member of the AITUC Working Committee from 1935 onward and from 1957 to 1970 was vice-president of AITUC. He became the all India Vice President of the CITU and the president of its West Bengal Committee when it was formed in 1970. He toured most of Northern India extensively to build the CITU in Hindi speaking belt. He was first elected to the Parliament in 1967 from Barrackpore

(Cont'd on page 3)

Working Class of India—Gird up your Loins save the Nation

R. Umanath

The Indian Working Class and progressive forces of India celebrated the 73rd Anniversary of October Revolution on 7th November this year. But from another angle, for us Indian working class, left, secular, and democratic forces, this year's 7th November will go down in history as the blackest day, because that was the day when V.P. Singh Government was felled by the unholy combination of Cong(I)-BJP-Chandrasekhar deserters. And why did they pull down this Government? Because when the secular foundation of our country and its constitution faced the imminent threat of being consumed in the communal flames and being reduced to ashes, paving the way for a Hindu theocratic state, the V.P. Singh Government notwithstanding its other weaknesses, had the guts to risk the existence of his government and take on this undeclared war, prevent the destruction and save the country, its unity and independence for the moment.

Who ignited this fire? For a number of years the BJP with the support of a section of the press spear-headed by 'Indian Express' has been nursing the ambition of becoming the alternative to Cong(I). Since the last parliamentary elections and assembly elections, it was biding the time for the opportune moment. When VHP declared its determination to demolish Babri-Masjid and Construction of temple on October 30th, the BJP assessed, the time had come to strike. It took over the task of demolition of the mosque and went ahead with the Rath Yatra leaving behind, trails of blood and more than 200 dead. The animus between Hindus and Muslims has become so intense that it will take years to cool down. The country has been pushed to the precipice of disintegration. The BJP had earlier committed repeatedly that its support to the N.F. Govt. was unconditional, and for this purpose it would not make an issue of questions on which there are differences between N.F. and itself. But since the BJP thought that the time had come to achieve its ambitious it betrayed its own commitment and announced that it would withdraw the support to the NF government if it is not permitted to demolish the mosque or its Ratha Yatra is stopped.

Times of India in confirming this objective of BJP, wrote in its article dated 10-11-90 :

"By taking advantage of the mass sentiment for Lord Ram, the BJP clearly made a bid to capture political power. That this would inflame communal passions and lead to so many deaths was cynically disregarded."

When the time had come for all patriotic people

and organisations to rally around the Government as one man to stop the tide of communal frenzy and save national and communal unity, Rajiv Gandhi took advantage of this very communal frenzy to split the Janata Dal and manoeuvred a situation in which the President had no other go but to invite the dissenters led by Chandrasekhar to form a Government. This is the first step to make way for the Cong(I) to stage a full come back in not a very distant future. This petty politicking when the country was on fire, exposes that Rajiv Gandhi is prepared to take the risk of disintegration of the country, to achieve his narrow political ends. This behaviour of the Rajiv Gandhi was like the man, who while his neighbour's house was on fire, and while all people around were busy trying to put out the fire, this man was busy lighting his cigarette in that very fire.

Chandrasekhar used this grave threat to the country's unity to ally with Rajiv Gandhi and split his own party and fulfil his life's personal ambition of becoming a Prime Minister. By sacrificing many lives, facing police attacks and goondagiri, the people of our country had given the mandate in 1989 elections that Cong(I) should not rule, that Cong(I) policies shall not continue. Shri Chandra Sekhar has sacrificed this mandate of the people at the altar of his personal ambition.

In 1979 when Mr. Charan Singh broke away from the then Janata Party and was invited by the Rashtrapati to form the Government, Shri Chandra Sekhar attacked it as 'putting premium on defections' and attacked the dissidents for 'choosing to strike the party when it was in trouble', and for 'resigning when their own government was facing a 'No Confidence motion.' But by himself doing the very thing in 1990, which he condemned in 1979, Mr. Chandrasekhar has not only betrayed himself, but exposed that the high sounding principles, ideology and values which he has been propounding all these years, were only meant to cover up his future personal ambitions.

And what is this defectors' Government going to do? Is it going to implement the Manifesto of the National Front to which Mr. Chandrasekhar himself was party? Absolutely not. He is to carry out the mandate issued to him by the Cong(I). So much was said by the AICC(I) spokesman Mr. V.N. Gadgil when he told the press on 9-11-90 as it appeared in the Hindu dated 10-11-90 :

"Defining the agenda of the Prime Minister

designate Mr. Chandrasekhar, the Cong(I) spokesman Shri Gadgil made it clear that it expected him not to do anything which was against 'Cong(I) ideology and policies,' in return for the crucial outside support it has extended. AICC(I) spokesman Gadgil added: 'Mr. Chandrasekhar is an old Congress man. We do not expect him to deviate from the Congress path.' This is further confirmed by Chandrasekhar himself after he took oath. Chandrasekhar had vehemently attacked National Front Government's liberalised industrial policy as one of opening the doors wide open to multinationals and endangering self-reliance. But immediately after assuming office, Mr. Chandrasekhar told the press that liberalisation policy will continue.

What more do we want to prove that Chandrasekhar government is a benami Cong(I) Government pledged to carry out anti-people's policies of the Rajiv Gandhi Government.

Both the BJP and Cong(I) have been playing opportunism on the Mandal Commission report as well. Notwithstanding the failure of the V.P. Singh Government to arrive at a consensus prior to its implementation, it was certainly a just and small step in trying to correct the social and economic imbalance suffered by the OBC's who constitute 52% of our population over centuries. While outwardly supporting the Mandal Commission, both the Cong(I) and BJP moved their youth and student organisation to rouse frenzy among the youth against Mandal Commission report, causing death of scores of young boys and girls by self immolation. To dub this attempt to set right an imbalance as casteism as the Indian press did, is like 'giving the dog a bad name and kill it.'

CITU congratulates V.P. Singh Government for having stood upright by secularism and national unity, when posed with the choice 'power or national unity.' The CITU congratulates the left parties—CPM, CPI, Forward Block and RSP for having been consistent and steadfast, to prevent Cong(I) authoritarianism from staging a come-back, and simultaneously expose and isolate communal and divisive forces, and for the utmost they did to mobilise secular forces along these lines, to avert catastrophe. CITU warns the entire Indian working class that by this change in Government and withdrawal of Kar Seva all is not over.

Our country is still facing the worst ever danger since independence. The VHP-BJP combine has announced that it is determined to demolish the mosque in Ayodhya and construct a Ram temple on it. In pursuance of that aim, they are distributing urns of ashes of those kar sevaks who died in firing near Ayodhya, throughout the country, to rouse the Hindu communal frenzy to the highest pitch. BJP has announced its plan to go to Southern States and other states left out during Ratha Yatra, to rouse communal frenzy, in the name of explanatory campaign. Ratha Yatra is to be replaced by 'Rail Yatra.' Above all, the VHP has announced that all these heinous activities will be followed by Kar Seva at

the disputed site again on 6th December. The country is sought to be drawn this time to a worst holocaust.

Upper caste vested interests are planning to rouse the frenzy of the innocent upper caste youth again on Mandal Commission. Imperialism will intensify its efforts to destabilise our country in a bigger way, taking advantage of the anarchic conditions that would be created. In the background of deteriorating situation in Punjab, Kashmir, and Assam, these forces are threatening to engulf the country into open massive caste and communal divisive conflagration.

The working class must be in the forefront in this heroic battle to defend our country's unity and communal amity against this onslaught. Our class is the most interested in protecting country's unity. Threat to unity means not only dismemberment of our country, but dismemberment of Indian working class as an all India class. It will be a death blow for our struggle for socialism in our country. It is a serious threat to all revolutionary, left democratic and secular movements of our country. This change of Government is a threat to the materialisation of the declared policies of V.P. Singh Government such as legislation for recognition by secret ballot, participation in management, vacation of victimisation of railwaymen, Central legislation for agricultural labourers and for the downtrodden construction workers etc. We shall not allow it to be. Gird up your loins to face this battle. Join with all left and secular forces to isolate all communalists and fundamentalists, defeat Rajiv-Chandrasekhar opportunists machinations and march forward upholding the banner of National unity, communal amity and independence. And in this we shall follow in the footsteps of our heroic martyrs, of Punjab, Assam and Darjeeling.

(From page 1)

Parliamentary Constituency and was its member for three terms. In 1951, he was a member of AITUC delegation to China also.

Comrade Ismail's name is associated with hundreds of Struggles of the Working Class. He was the President, Road Transport Workers Federation of India and the Forward Seamens Union of India, was Vice-President of Water Transport Workers Federation of India and was connected with over 50 trade unions in West Bengal, guiding their activities. He was a close friend of thousands of Trade Union activists and a source of great inspiration for them. His strong belief in Marxism-Leninism and in the power of the Workers to change the world, led him to become an enthusiastic organiser which he remained till the last days of his life. Comrade Ismail led a truly spartan life and his family consisted of the party and CITU Comrades.

The CITU dips its red banner paying respectful homage to Com. Ismail and sends its deep condolences to the bereaved members of his family.

Coal Unions Condemn CIL Agreement with INTUC

The following press statement was issued on 27 October '90 by M. K. Pandhe, President All India Coal Workers federation (CITU), Sunil Sen, Gen. Secretary IMWF (AITUC), Jayanta Poddar, President, H.K.M.F. (HMS) and T.C. Jumde (BMS).

We strongly protest at the agreement signed by the Coal India Management with the INTUC leadership involving the issues which were being discussed by the Joint Bi-partite Committee of Coal Industry. The agreement bypasses the AITUC, CITU, HMS and BMS and the JBCCI.

The agreement provides for quantum of bonus upto Rs. 2000/- only while in other public sector undertakings such as Steel, BHEL etc. more than Rs. 3000/- were paid to the workers drawing a salary above Rs. 2500/-. In other public sector undertakings

the workers drawing salary above Rs. 3500/- have received bonus.

The agreement signed with INTUC is an open attempt to patronage them and scuttle the JBCCI so we appeal to all the Coal Workers to condemn the agreement and demand for enhancing the quantum beyond Rs. 2000/-. They also should fight for ensuring 8½ per cent bonus to all workers in Coal industry without any ceiling. If there is no enhancing the quantum of bonus for all the workers at an early date, the Coal workers will be left with no other alternative but to resort to direct actions including strike.

We hope the CIL Management will realise the gravity of the situation and see that quantum of bonus is enhanced at an early date.

Consumer Price Index Numbers for Industrial Workers

(Base 1982 = 100)

Centre	Aug.	Sep.	Linking factor for Old base									
	1990	1990										
ALL-INDIA	190	191	4.93	Belgaum	184	184	—	Varanasi	210	210	5.12	
Gudur	172	172	4.33	Hubli-Dharwar	186	186	—	Asansol	186	187	4.77	
Guntur	180	180	5.60	Mercara	175	175	—	Calcutta	200	201	4.74	
Hyderabad	178	179	5.23	Alwaye	172	173	5.19	Darjeeling	175	182	4.55	
Visakhapatnam	190	190	—	Mundakayam	180	181	4.67	Durgapur	200	201	—	
Warrangal	181	183	—	Quilon	177	180	—	Haldia	208	210	—	
Doom-Dooma-				Trivandrum	190	191	—	Howrah	209	212	4.12	
Tinsukia	176	177	4.05	Bhalghat	195	196	5.24	Jalpaiguri	182	183	4.16	
Gauhati	195	195	—	Bhilai	176	177	3.49	Raniganj	176	177	4.40	
Labac-Silchar	171	174	3.96	Bhopal	191	193	5.46	Chandigarh	184	184	—	
Mariani-Jorhat	183	184	3.95	Indore	199	199	5.18	Delhi	200	201	4.97	
Rangapara-Tezpur	183	184	4.29	Jabalpur	213	215	6.41	Pondicherry	200	204	—	
Jamshedpur	183	185	4.68	Bombay	198	199	5.12					
Jharia	179	181	4.63	Nagpur	199	199	4.99	Additional Series of Labour Bureau				
Kodarma	172	172	5.43	Nasik	198	199	—	Kothagudem	203	205	3.25	
Monghyr	180	184	5.29	Pune	195	195	—	Himachal Pradesh	186	190	3.75	
Noamundi	183	186	4.58	Sholapur	192	194	5.03	Bhilwara	190	190	3.20	
Ranchi-Hatia	199	199	—	Barbil	182	183	5.00	Chindwara	193	193	2.59	
Ahmedabad	193	195	4.78	Rourkela	177	178	3.59	Tripura	189	199	4.37	
Baroda	191	193	—	Amritsar	189	195	5.19	Goa	198	197	3.40	
Bhavnagar	196	200	4.99	Ludhiana	190	189	—					
Rajkot	194	198	—	Ajmer	192	195	5.01	Other Series of Labour Bureau				
Surat	200	201	—	Jaipur	188	188	5.17	<i>Centre</i>		<i>Base</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>July</i>
Faridabad	184	187	—	Coimbatore	173	175	5.35		1990	1990		
Yamunanagar	181	186	5.53	Coonoor	196	195	4.80	Ammathi	1960	873	895	
Srinagar	180	185	5.47	Madras	185	185	5.05	Chickmagalur	1960	887	894	
Bangalore	180	180	5.66	Maduri	188	191	5.27	Kolar Gold Field	1960	910	914	
				Salem	180	180	—	Gwalior	1960	974	974	
				Tiruchirappall	193	194	—	Sambalpur	—	—	—	
				Agra	191	188	—	Berhampur	—	—	—	
				Ghaziabad	198	198	—	Cuttack	—	—	—	
				Kanpur	200	203	4.69					
				Saharanpur	192	192	5.06					

Note: Figures on old base can be obtained by multiplying the Index Number on New Base by the linking factor given and rounding off the result to nearest whole number.

—Dash denotes new centres under 1982 series.

No Unanimity on new Industrial Relations Law—INTUC Joins with Employers to Assign Formalism in Trade Union movement Five National Trade Unions Dissent Bipartite Committee Report

JIBON ROY

The Report of the Bipartite Committee on New Industrial Relations Law was signed and submitted before the Central Government in the last week of October. Since its release, a section of the press, atoned with its self congratulatory characterisation as 'new thinking', has gone effusive in praising the report as if it has opened an 'era' of bipartism and industrial harmony. The position is rather different. The report, with discordant notes appended on almost all the clauses and sections together with the voluminous dissents which constitutes 48 of the 115 pages report alludes its incoherent and erratic character. Barring few substantive unanimous recommendations and itemisation of some of the National Front Govt's decisions like Worker's Participation in Management which the entire trade union movement has welcomed, the drafting of the Report took the pleasure to re-state the well known differing views on major industrial relations issues. Five of the 9 national trade union, i.e. CITU, AITUC, UTUC (LS), TUCC, UTUC have also submitted a note of dissent.

The Chairman of the Bipartite Committee, Shri G. Ramanujam himself was found fastidious when he commented about the recommendations in the foreward of the report. He said "the Committee had several sittings and has done its best to formulate its recommendations for a new Industrial Relations Law, including the Trade Union Law. There are some recommendations which are not unanimous."

Shri Ramanujam, of course to find fault with the divergent views blamed the composition of the Committee and commented "looking to the composition of the Committee, it is not a matter of surprise."

N.F. Government's Commitment not Explored

Shri Ramanujam's observation is of course partially true and to that extent anticipated. It was not expected that the employers group will easily agree with any set of Industrial Relations Law which would provide sufficient safeguard to labour against the so called employer prerogative of hiring and firing of workers and also to guarantee suitable expansion of trade union democracy. Both the propositions were in the card of the N.F. Govt for immediate enactment. What was not expected, especially after the arrival of national consensus on number of crucial industrial relations issues was that the Central Trade Unions would fail to face the employers in the Bipartite Committee from a common platform. This failure would prove to be expensive for the trade union movement on two counts. Because, it

had been the first time in India that a Govt at the Centre released its initiative from an Indian Labour Conference to settle all the Industrial relations questions through bi-partite discussions and the National Front Govt was publicly committed to bring about radical change in the system. In this context it may be said, the Bipartite Committee on New Industrial Relations Law was formed at the proposal of the Government in the 29th Session of Indian Labour Conference held during 21-22 April, 1990.

Deiberate Diversion by INTUC Leadership

Had the Hon'ble Chairman of the Bipartite Committee been sincere and contemplative he could have seen that the stand of the central trade union which he himself presides over ie INTUC has to be squarely blamed for division in the workers group. It chose to raise dissent on the question of secret ballot as the basis for determining the collective bargaining agency and the workers representatives in the participative forums which had been unanimously accepted in the National Seminar held at New Delhi on 8th & 9th January '90. INTUC representatives alongwith the Employers also sought to replace the existing Industrial Relations Machineries by Industrial Relations Commission. This is the most sordid part of the recommendations by the National Commission of Labour made two decades ago which since then in the face of stiff resistance by the workers could not be implemented by the Govt. The IRC concept had been toyed by Sanat Mehta Commission and was pursued in the Industrial Relations bill introduced by the Rajiv Govt in Parliament in the year 1988 which was not pursued for the same reason and subsequently dropped by the NF Govt at the recommendation of the 29th. Indian Labour Conference. It is unfortunate that the BMS & HMS have lent their support to INTUC leadership. Since the employers were consistant in propagating the formation of such a quasi-judicial body, the employers support to the formation of IRC was obvious. What is not obvious is that a national trade union centre echoed the same voice with the employers to plunge the initiative of the trade unions in the vicious dilatory circle of so called quasijudicial mechanism in a system which is provenly loaded in favour of the employer class.

On the question of secret ballot despite the fact that the earlier N.F. Government sponsored Seminar in which INTUC also was a participant, unanimously concluded in favour of Secret Ballot the INTUC leadership has virtually vetoed it with employers support. It is therefore preposterous to blame the

composition of the committee for its unanimity in the decisions. BMS's support to Secret Ballot was of course subject to its operation amongst the unionised members only.

T.U. Democracy-Pre-Condition for Success of any I.R. Law

The note of dissent given by five central trade unions ie CITU, AIUC, UTUC, UTUC (LS) and TUCC sought to prevail upon the Govt to meet the primary conditions for the success of any industrial relations law; firstly, through the acceptance of the vital ILO conventions concerning Right to Organise, Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining (Convention Nos 87 & 98) and secondly recognising the workers right to decide who should negotiate with the management on their behalf. Unless these vital aspects are settled once for all no effective machinery for the settlement of Industrial Dispute can be worked out, the note of dissent asserted. In the approach highlighted in the drafting of the report by Shri G Ramanujam, the Chairman has relegated both of these vital aspects to the background. The report on the contrary sought to highlight the continuation of the past enactments which are framed on the basis of the Master servant relations. The report therefore has taken pains to glorify the past laws including those enacted during British regime; even those enacted with the sole purpose of getting the militant trade union movement scuttled and succumb to imperialist pressure.

The report is etched no doubt with ritualistic phrases of its desire to make the orientation of the industrial relations law as labour protective. But proper scrutiny will reveal that beyond recording intention, at no stage 'labour protective' criteria is accepted as a matter of directive objectivity. On the contrary, much pains are taken to build up an illusive premise of 'equal partnership' for shadowing the reality of master servant relations and counterfeiting the labour. The proposals of substituting the nomenclature of 'Industrial Dispute Act' by 'Industrial Relations Law' and 'Collective Bargaining' by 'Direct Bipartite negotiations' is the flash of this psychogenic. As the continuation of this hypocrisy, the Report sought to equalise strikes with lock out and lay-off.

Against this formulations the 5 central trade unions in their note of dissent said "Since we are trying to work out a machinery in a class ridden society, the industrial relations law has to protect the working class. By merely calling workers as partners of industry the employer-employee relationship cannot come to an end. If the profit motive is the bedrock of our production system the antagonistic interests are built in the system itself. The system cannot be ended by merely passing a law or by expressing pious wishes. It would end only when a genuine socialist society is built. Hence, within the frame work of the present social system when we try to evolve a new legal machinery we must ensure adequate protection to workers since relations between

labour and management are relations between two unequals. No talk of human aspects of relations can hide this stark reality in our social system."

I. R. C.—For Mutilating Militant Trade Unionism

The proposed Industrial Relations Commission will act as a superbody placing the whole industrial relations system in a straight jacket and keeping the entire trade union movement at its mercy. Right from the registration of trade union, from conciliation to the enforcement of its own decisions IRC will have comprehensive functions. Industrial Relations Commission will even hear the appeals against its own decisions. This position cannot be accepted by the trade union movement, specially in a class ridden society. Despite the earnestness of the drafter of the Report of providing institutional guarantee to recruit 'independent' judges for the IRC; it is bound to be proved mirage in the face of onslaught of the employers.

What is most important is that the terms of reference fixed for the IRC will shift a major part of the trade union activities to its desk and make industry level bi-partite negotiations more and more inoperative. Legal wrangling will replace the normal trade union activities.

Virtual Illegalisation of Strike

Chapter 11 of the Report starts with (Section 11.1) "It is agreed that strikes and lock-outs shall be the weapons of last resort. As far as possible are to be avoided". This formulation gradually moves down section by section towards section 11.7 which imposes the consent of a two third majority by ballot before going in for any strike action. Section 11.5 makes 14 days notice compulsory for any strike as a new provision in the proposed law. Alongwith the above sections if the provision under the chapter concerning formation of IRC (Chapter-10) and voluntary Arbitration (Chap-9) are taken together the proposed Industrial Relations law will virtually make any strike impossible. On the contrary, the Report has failed to impose semblance of effective restriction on lock out.

Sections 10.8, 10.11 and 10.13 under the Industrial Relations Commission chapter of the Report together carries monstrous power in immobilising any strike. Even if it is called after fulfilling the provisions of strike ballot under section 11.7 According to the above stated provisions if the bipartite negotiation fails and the process of voluntary arbitration is not availed any of the parties in the negotiating teams or the appropriate Govt. can move the IRC for adjudication of the dispute and the appropriate Govt can simultaneously prohibit any strike 'or lock out'.

Section 10.11 makes the decision of the Conciliation wing binding on both the parties, section 10.8 though provides the right of appeal before state/central IRC against the award of Labour courts in respective areas, but no right of appeal against the decision of IRCS. The provisions under Voluntary Arbitration (Chapter-9) can make any strike decision

illegal if an employer makes a deal with a minority union to go for voluntary arbitration. On the question of voluntary arbitration notes of dissent has suggested that a dispute can be referred to arbitration only at its approval by 72% support of the negotiating body.

On Chapter 11 of the Report under caption 'Strike & Lock Out, the note of dissent by 5 Central Trade Unions have said "trade unions in India have been resorting to strike action only when all avenues of settlement are exhausted. Employers however use the weapon of lockout to tire out the workers with a view to force them into submission. Strike is a right of workers to resist the injustice of the capitalist class while lockout is an offensive of the capitalist against the struggling workers. In a capitalist system therefore strikes and lockouts cannot be equated". The dissent further says "therefore, we suggest that severe restrictions should be provided in the law on the employers attempt to declare lockout. One of them should be that no employer should declare lock out without permission of the Govt."

The dissenting Central Trade Unions while not subscribing to the view that too many strikes are taking place in the country demanded the qualitative improvements of the existing industrial relation machineries and at the same time disapproved any move to scuttle the right to strike. They opined 'the trade unions should have right to withdraw from conciliation or tribunal proceedings and resort to direct action including strike'.

Governments Role Made Almost Irrelevant

The report as it is explained earlier has shifted most of the authority of the Govts to State or Central IRC. In an Industrial Relations situation, as prescribed by the Report, when the right of workers to decide their negotiating unions are denied and the right to strike is almost scuttled, making the Govts ineffective on their intervening capacities would result ultimately the taking over of the entire affairs by the Employers. Through section 6,9 of the report the Trade Union Centres, barring CITU, UTUC and TUCC, have agreed to concede the Employers demand to bring the Companies having the paid up share of 51% or more held by Central Government from State to Centre as 'appropriate authority'.

Free for Patronised Unions

The proposal to constitute a Negotiating Council in case no union is found to be possessing the qualifying percentage of membership to be declared as sole bargaining agency, is no doubt a positive feature in the report. According to INTUC 50% should constitute the qualifying membership for sole Bargaining Agency while rest of the workers side proposed the percentage as 65%. As per INTUC proposal the unions having the total verified membership of 75% will form the Negotiating Council together. The rest of the Workers group has however suggested that the Unions that hold together

85% mandate in the Secret Ballot would form the negotiating Council. However, all are unanimous to fix a qualifying percentage of 10 percent for inclusion in the Negotiating Council. This positive aspect will find no relevance in the context of recommendations of 'Verification by Check Off system' and introduction of IRC and therefore in the end patronised unions will get precedence.

The proposals of employers, INTUC & NLO to continue Bombay Industrial Relations Act and the Madhya Pradesh Industrial Relations Acts are shameless pleading in favour of institutionalising the 'patronisation of unions'. Both the Acts are known as black acts for not providing any right for the unrecognised unions even to raise a dispute with the labour directorate.

Few Positive Aspects

There are issues where the entire Workers Group and the Employers could come to the unanimity or the near unanimity. These are concerning the Registration of Union and the minimum membership requirement, membership fee, role of outsiders and also coverage of industry.

According to consensus opinion single industrial law will cover all Employees connected with industries, educational institutions, hospitals, dispensaries, charitable institutions, domestic servants, agriculture etc. Employer's side however desired the definition contained in the I.D. (Amendment) Act 1982 to continue. The Report suggested that the Trade Unions operating in the Central Government departments and covered under Joint Consultative machinery will not be covered by the new Law. For all the trade unions in organised sector registration is made compulsory. Trade unions based on particular craft, occupation, caste, creed, community, race, religion or persons originating from a particular region will not be registered. 5 National trade unions have however demanded in the note of dissent that the existing craft unions need not be banned and they should be allowed opportunity to develop their unions into industrywise unions.

The report through endeavour in defining the lay off and almost unanimity on the question of lay off compensation has definitely made a responsive role on this vital question. Rate of compensation is fixed @ 50% for those lay off which are beyond the control of employer and the rate will be 100% in cases which fall within the control of employers. This will cover casual and badli workers also. Against the united demand of the workers group the employers atleast conceded that modernisation will not lead to retrenchment. The report has however failed to suggest any protective measure against the menace of closure which is increasing in leaps and bounds.

Vital Role of Left Trade Unions

One of the members representing Employers in the Committee have made the employers manifesto

clear in a clarificatory note. The note says: 'It is earnestly submitted that incentive package for export zone industries, new policy for foreign investment and industrial liberalisation for attracting overseas investment must be matched with an equally tenable but unloaded labour relations machinery both as to policy and operational mechanism based on mutual trust in and accountability of executive management, restoring to them a reasonable but due 'right to manage' (page 114) Proximity of the INTUC's position to that 'operational mechanism' satisfies the said employer when he says 'I wish the Chairman had viewed the position dispassionately and not thrown his weight indiscriminately with the labour side in recording all the critical issues' (page 114).

It is unfortunate when the INTUC was making all effort in dragging on the discussion to compromise with the employers position, HMS and BMS representatives extended powerful support to the same by agreeing on the vital issues like IRC, and strike ballot etc. BMS even wavered from the national consensus on secret ballot through introducing the condition of 'unionised membership'. In such a critical situation left trade unions have played a vital role not only through pointing out disagreements but also in toning down many of the aggressive postures. The Left trade unions throughout the period of deliberations in the Committee made sincere endeavour to bring all the trade unions together and to find the area of common understanding. This effort may not have produced desired result in the formulation of the report, but has surely given a good ground to the working class for their struggle for trade union democracy and the right to strike. On behalf of the CITU Com. M. K. Pandhe as member and Com. P. K. Ganguly as alternate member played the most important role in the Committee.

Stop The War Mania

The following statement is issued by Com. R. Umarath, Vice President of CITU on 10 Nov. '90.

The CITU strongly condemns the action of USA in sending fresh re-inforcements of more than one lakh of its troops, to Saudi Arabia, making its total cross 3 lakhs. US seems to be itching for a military action in Iraq. Having failed to win over many countries in favour of military action, and with many countries joining the chorus for a peaceful solution. United States is perhaps building up a touch and go situation so that military action would become a fait accompli and thus compel other countries to join them. This course is dangerous to peace not only in middle East but for the world at large. The CITU appreciates that the USSR has not given its approval for military action. The CITU calls upon the entire working class of India and people in general to mobilise in big strength in protest against the course taken by USA, and demand withdrawal of all foreign forces from middle East, pave the way for peaceful settlement and thus contribute our mite to safeguard world peace.

Trade Unions Condemn VHP's Decision to Start Kar Seva Again

We, the representatives of the CITU, AITUC, HMS, UTUC, TUCC and UTUC (LS) condemn the decision of the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and the support given to it by the BJP, RSS and Bajrang Dal, to start the second phase of Kar Seva at Ayodhya from December 6 to construct the Ram temple by demolishing the Babri Masjid. While the trade unions are not opposed to the construction of a Ram Temple at Ayodha, we reiterate our opinion that it should not be built at the disputed area by demolishing the Babri Masjid.

The violent attempt made by these rabid Hindu communalists on October 30 to destroy the dome of the Masjid had already resulted in communal polarisation and riots leading to killings of hundreds of innocent people, the minorities in various parts of the country. The situation continues to be extremely volatile in the country, particularly in U. P. The muslim fundamentalists and the Sikh extremists instigated riots in some parts of Delhi. The Khalistani terrorists have intensified their activities by killing RSS activists and innocent bus passengers. The activities of the muslim fundamentalists in Kashmir and the ULFA in Assam are going on unabated.

In this situation the call of the VHP-RSS-BJP combine to restart the Kar Seva is a deliberate move to engulf the country in a communal conflagration, which will only boost the imperialist forces to dismember the country.

The trade unions demand of the VHP to rescind their decision forthwith. We call upon the Government of India and U. P. to take firm stand against the VHP-RSS-BJP's decision and safeguard the disputed place from their vandalism as they had done earlier.

The trade unions further call upon all the unions, all section of workers and the democratic and secular forces to unitedly resist the move of these communal organisations and launch campaign to maintain communal harmony by holding street corner meetings, demonstration, rallies, conventions etc. The trade unions further call upon the Government of India to settle the Ramjanambhoomi-Babri Masjid dispute through negotiations, failing which all parties must abide by the court verdict.

24.11.90/New Delhi.

The reinstatement order must be implemented

The order was ultimately passed by the Railway Minister for reinstatement of the victimised railway employees. But it was passed at the eleventh hour when the time had nearly run out for the National Front Govt. Almost immediately after the issue of the order, with the arrest of their leader on Ratha Yatra BJP had withdrawn its support to the National Front Govt. The die hard bureaucrats of the Railway Board immediately seized the opportunity to bungle with the matter. The NF Govt. was in office for another fortnight but the Railway Board did not issue administrative orders for the implementation of the order of the Minister. A Calcutta language daily carried a report that the President was believed to have expressed his reservation about immediate implementation of the order. Whether the report has any basis or not is not immediately ascertainable. But the fact is that the Railway Board has not taken any step for reinstatement of the victimised employees. Most of the employees victimised are out of job since 1980-81. After a full decade of suffering undergone alongwith their family members the victimised, the courageous activists of railway trade union movement who preferred to suffer rather than to surrender their legitimate rights and compromise their legitimate demands as also the members and supporters of the unions they led, those who had been continuing with the struggle for their just demands and over and above for reinstatement of their victimised colleagues, saw a ray of hope in the announcement of the erstwhile Railway Minister. It has begun to recede.

Nobody will, of course, appreciate the passing of the reinstatement order by former minister at the eleventh hour. The railway workers remembered that in 1977 the workers victimised in connection with 1974 strike were reinstated by the Railway Minister of the Janata Govt. Madhu Dandavate within six weeks after assumption of office. They expected similar action from George Fernandez who is still described by some as the fire brand leader of the railway trade union movement. Their hopes were getting belied as month after month rolled by without any tangible action. But nobody was in any doubt about the role of the hard boiled bureaucrats of the Railway Board who are vested with enormous power. Everyone understood that the resistance by the bureaucracy must have been a very potent factor causing delay in reinstatement of the victimised. Now the very text of the minister's order as well as a further press report has made startling revelation of what these people were upto.

When the minister issued orders in early September, a report states, "the Railway Board was certainly not happy. The Chairman put up a note strongly urging the Minister to reconsider his

decision." The Chairman told the minister that reinstatement of the victimised in 1977 "led to the erosion of commitment and discipline, a series of wild cat disruptions to smooth working of categorical associations and a general decline in the performance of the railway". The Chairman said the action taken in 1980-81 "applied the corrective measure to restore industrial harmony and discipline the benefits of which have been seen in the decade that followed, which has been the most productive in the history of Indian Railway so far". In view of the Minister's assurance to the Parliament, however, the Board Chairman suggested that the same could be materially complied with if the employees are compensated by suitable financial measures.

George Fernandez did not accept the Chairman's view and in the course of a further order he remarked that discipline and commitment cannot be imposed through repression. "There is more to industrial relations and discipline than dangling the sword of Democles over the workforce of an establishment. That would be negation of the very principles of democracy. The right to form associations or unions is a fundamental right under Article 19 of the Constitution and the right to strike follows from it." In the order sheet itself Fernandez pointed out that it was owing to the 1974 strike that the railwaymen finally achieved their bonus demand whereafter it was made available to other central Govt employees as well as State Govt employees in one form or another. The Minister said that he had given the option to all victimised employees to either rejoin duty or to nominate one member of their family—he could not think of any other way of compensating those workers for the suffering they had gone through.

From the various remarks made in the course of the revised order itself one would feel that Fernandez the fire brand leader of the railwaymen had once again come alive in Fernandez the Railway Minister. Everyone would welcome his comments. But the only regret is that he had come up with this order late. Had he asserted himself even a month earlier, the victimised might have by now come back to their job. This was the minimum expectation, a perfectly legitimate one, of the railway workers as also of the entire trade union movement. The delay has extended the period of suffering of the victimised workers and their families indefinitely.

During the last days of the NF Govt. the bureaucracy of the Railway Board was obviously trying to sabotage the minister's effort by desperately delaying the matter. They did not have any difficulty in sensing that crisis was developing in the ruling party and they counted on chances of the Govt. bowing

out before the matter is finalised. Thus it is seen that not only the Board urged the Minister to review the order passed in September, but when the revised order was issued, reiterating the earlier decision to reinstate the victimised, they according to press report again brought the matter to the attention of the Cabinet Secretary. In his note "the latter is understood to have pointed out that since the Railway Minister's orders will have repercussions in other departments of the Govt, the matter should have been first referred to Department of personnel and Administrative reforms." The matter is believed to have been referred back to the Minister. At this stage the Minister got the decision approved by the Cabinet. If the report about President's intervention to stop implementation has any basis at all, for that also perhaps the bureaucratic ingenuity is to be thanked.

But the position now seems to be clear, the Board may choose to place the matter before the new Govt. The Board has failed to prevent the National Front Govt from issuing a reinstatement order, the Railway Minister had had a hair breadth escape from the Boards sabotage bid; the final order as reported in the press, was passed with the approval of the Cabinet. But the Board also had scored a "victory" in their nefarious game, they now have found a plea to further delay the matter. But the danger is not simply of delay. The Board will now make their final bid to get the decision changed by the new Govt. So while generally the expectation will be that the new Govt. which will do every thing to brighten its image, is unlikely to annul the reinstatement order out of various considerations, for the workers and their trade unions there is no room for complacence. The railway workers and the trade union and democratic movement in general have not only to remain alert but to take active steps so that oganical bureaucracy may not do the mischief. Efforts in appropriate manner should be taken to persuade and pressurise the new Govt. to clear the order early.

George Fernandes now ceases to be the Railway Minister, but he never ceased to be a rail trade union leader. The rail trade union leader George Fernandez is now confronted with the task of getting implemented the order he himself had passed as the Railway Minister. As Railway Minister he failed on many counts to fulfil the expectation of the railway workers, the workers would now hope once again that he would throw his full weight as a trade union leader to get the unfulfilled pledge of the NF Govt. redeemed as far as the victimised workers are concerned.

Submission of Annual Returns

Attention of State Committees of CITU are drawn to the following points and request is made to act seriously and immediately considering the urgency of the matter:

1. CITU conference is scheduled to be held in Feb. 1991. The Secretariat had decided that paid up membership of 1989 would be the basis for allotment of delegation to the states and it was also decided that the annual returns received till 15th December 1990 only would be taken into consideration for this.

Please send the remaining Annual Returns with money to reach us before 15th December, 1990.

2. Verification of membership of Central TU organisation as agreed upon by all the Central TUs would now be implemented to ascertain the membership as on 31st December 1989. It is imperative then that we present full strength of our membership and this is only possible when we are able to take on record the membership based on the annual returns submitted.

Please take effective steps to see that the copies of Annual Returns of all our affiliated unions are positively submitted to the Centre without further delay.

Finally, "Drive for increasing membership of CITU" was one of our foremost and immediate tasks set-forth by the Dhanbad General Council Meeting and reiterated in the subsequent Working Committee and General Council meetings of Kalyani and Kanpur. Caution was also given from time to time through circulars sent out from this office to consolidate the existing membership strength by ensuring that our unions fulfill the statutory as well as constitutional obligations. The law stipulates that every registered trade union must submit their union's Annual Return latest by 30th of April every year failing which they are liable to lose their registration. As per the improved procedure of verification of membership agreed upon by all the Central Trade Unions on December 29, 1986, one clause stipulates that the Registrar of Trade Unions should send a list of trade unions which have been deregistered to the Central trade union organisation. This process has already been initiated by the Labour Ministry recently directing the Labour Secretaries of all State Govts/U.T.s to act accordingly as a prelude to the commencement of process of verification. We may also inform you that we have recently received one snch list of deregistered union from Labour Commissioner of Madhya Pradesh. Earlier we had alerted our State Committees that process of deregistration had started in Rajasthan and Tripura.

Keeping the above in mind, do the needful.
This is urgent.

(Ranjit Basu)
Secretary

Nationalise Jute Industry

☆ On behalf of the Jute Workers, the Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union (CITU) have submitted the following memorandum to the Govt. of India demanding among other things, the nationalisation of the Jute industry—Editor

To
Shri Sarad Jadav,
Hon'ble Minister-in-Charge of Textile (Jute),
Government of India,
New Delhi.

Dear Sir,

You are aware of the fact that the indigenous jute industry was the traditional foreign exchange earner and still it earns more than 250 crores of foreign exchange annually, exporting jute goods to the world market. The internal market is also expanding steadily which absorbs 90% of the jute goods production of all jute mills. In this context, the jute workers are all along demanding nationalisation of the jute industry—right from purchase of the raw jute from the primary market to sale of jute goods in the home and foreign market for the national interest as well as for the benefit of workers and the jute growers. The jute workers of West Bengal have organised many strike struggles since 1969 demanding total nationalisation. The West Bengal Legislative Assembly twice passed unanimous resolution to that effect and accordingly an all-party deputation met Smt Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister, Govt. of India in the year 1982. At that time she assured the leaders that she would consider the demand but nothing happened when Rajiv Gandhi became Prime Minister in 1984, he straightway denied to nationalise the industry and instead liberalised the policy of importing HDPE granules in the interest of the Synthetic Packaging Industry at the cost of jute industry which provides livelihood to millions in the eastern India. The Left Front Government of West Bengal has also been demanding nationalisation of the entire industry since long.

We are not opposed to the use of synthetics for other purposes, we want that it should not be used for the manufacturing of packaging materials. If it is banned the condition of jute industry will change and all the locked out mills will re-open.

The trade unions have strong reservations about circular looms. This question was never discussed with trade unions. They apprehend that circular looms drastically reduces working hands. Its product of synthetic increases pollution when it is thrown as waste. It viciates the soil and water also.

A tripartite agreement was signed that the

number of jute mill workers in West Bengal will be maintained at 2½ lakhs. But it has been violated and today it has come down to one lakh sixty thousand.

Whatever the amount sanctioned by the government of India upto the last year in the name of modernisation of the jute industry, the owners never invested it for the betterment of the industry, on the other, they syphoned off the whole amount of profits which the industry earned through a long period, into other industrial units in other states thus leaving the industry in a financial crisis.

During the last five years a new development has taken place. A number of jute mills resorted to prolonged lockout for alleged shortage of finance. During the lockout in some mills the ownership of the mill and the management changed. New set of owners, mainly the jute suppliers, came forward and purchased those liquidated and locked out mills violating the terms of tripartite industrywise agreements. These management put derogatory terms before the starving workers suggesting less wages, wage freeze, more and more workload, deferred payment of bonus, P. F., E. S. I., and Gratuity etc. The workers had to accept these condition under protest.

Now, the situation has changed with the change of government at the Centre. It has raised new hopes in the minds of the jute workers as well as jute growers that positive steps will be taken to protect the entire jute industry.

We therefore, put forward the following demands for your immediate intervention :—

1. (a) Total nationalisation of the jute industry from the purchase of raw jute to manufacture and sale of jute goods in the domestic market and abroad.
(b) Immediate re-opening of the closed and sick mills and taking over the management of the mills who are paying less wages. (List of such mills are enclosed herewith).
2. JCI should procure entire raw jute at village level at remunerative prices.
3. Ban on HDPE granules for packaging material, i.e. mixed or poly jute bags. Strict implementation of statutory obligation to use jute bags and to bring more areas for compulsory use of jute bags.
4. Diversification of jute products—such as Blanket, Window Curtain, Wall Coverings, Decorative Cloth, Tea, Apple and Orange Chest and jute laminated other materials for making decorative

(Cont'd on page 14)

Secular Forces Ready to Face The Challenge

“We the people of India gathered here today have inherited an old tradition of unity between the different linguistic and ethnic groups, religious communities, and regional identities, through our long history of struggle against colonial rule. This inheritance, enshrined in the Indian Constitution as a commitment to secularism, is one without which we can neither progress nor even maintain our present existence. We pledge therefore not only to preserve the communal harmony, national unity and ethnic co-existence bequeathed to us by our forebearers who sacrificed everything to free this country from slavery, but to carry it forward so that future generations can be proud that we have done our duty, whatever the challenges and dangers we may have to face.”

This is the pledge to-day of not only the participants in the Delhi human chain but of all the secular and democratic forces of this country who have girded up their loins to fight the communalist forces throughout the length & breadth of this Secular Nation. Today we are in the midst of an unprecedented crisis. The challenge of communal holocaust threatens the very existence of our nation. Fratricidal conflagrations have already taken their toll. Blood drips blemishing the map of the country. The threat to the unity and integrity of the nation has never been as real as it is now.

The Ram-Janmabhoomi Mandir/Babri Masjid dispute is pushing the country to the brink of a national disaster. India with all its diversity is one. The resilience that the Indian society has shown flows from the emotional integration of our people. Today the insistence of the communal forces tends to tear apart this traditional fabric of emotional integrity of our people.

Through a concerted participation in rallies, jathas, and other forms of mass action and the unprecedented response to Human Chain Programme the secular forces of the country have unequivocally expressed their determination for keeping the country united and carry forward the traditions of the freedom struggle. Their growing voice pronounces the resolve to defend secularism and unity. It is this dynamism of the people which has resisted a major catastrophe till now.

Delhi : In the background of the grave national crisis arising in the last week of October, in the wake of the RSS-BJP-VHP's strident communal campaign, the forces of patriotism, secularism, communal harmony and peace, too, have intensified their campaign of mass mobilisation to meet the challenge headlong. As a part of this campaign, Delhi, the national capital, witnessed several actions during the week, the outstanding among them being the 'peace March'

of October 26 and 'Chain of Friendship' (Maitri Bandhan) of October 30.

There were industrial workers, employees, youth and students, teachers, lawyers, intellectuals, and a sizeable number of women in the Silent March. They were from all religious communities, determined not to allow the communal forces play havoc with national life. Carrying placards and banners in thousands, they proclaimed that the Indian people will protect the unity of their country as the apple of their eyes; that, come what may, the game of the anti-national forces will not be allowed to succeed.

During the whole week the map of Delhi was dotted by several such programmes in one or another part of the city. The campaign reached its culmination with the Human Chain programme of October 30-the D-Day forced upon the nation by communal forces. Thousands of people from all walks of life thronged the busy Patel Chowk and, at 1.20 in the afternoon, held hands to form a more than one km long human chain, proclaiming that India belonged to her peaceful toilers and was not a property of the communal forces, that no theocratic regime would be allowed to come up in the country. At the end of the programme the participants took a pledge for defence of communal harmony read out by Shabana Azmi.

The human chain programme called by nine youth-student bodies, viz. DYFI, SFI, AIYF, AIYL, AISF, RYF, PSU and YJD, later converted into a mass meeting at the Patel Chowk, addressed by Union Ministers Subodh Kant Sahay and Ram Vilas Paswan, M. A. Baby, Hannan Mollah and others.

Kerala : In enthusiastic response to a statewide campaign for religious amity and people's brotherhood, consisting of house-to-house visit by several hundreds of squads and communal harmony jathas led by Ministers and leaders of the LDF, as well as hundreds of public meetings, the people of Kerala forged on October 30 a mighty 760 km long Human Chain extending through the whole length of the State to stem and shackle the vile, venomous and sinister forces seeking to inundate the country with communal conflict.

The RSS-VHP-BJP combine made a wild, frantic attempt to cast a sombre cloud of terror over the State to intimidate people put off the Human Chain of peace, national solidarity, religious harmony and people's brotherhood.

On October 29 an RSS gang attacked with petrol bombs and crackers a group of LDF worker's engaged in the work of putting up flags and festoons in the city late at night. They put up posters and various places describing the Human Chain as a 'Babri Chain' and 'anti-Hindu chain'.

They declared a bandh for the 30th, hoping thereby that by focussing their attacks on a particular community, they could set ablaze communal clashes and riots. Accordingly at 3.30, just an hour before the linking of the chain along the National Highway they attacked a hotel in the heart of the city with bombs and severely injured a peddlar with slashes of a sword. Instantly, the terrified shopkeepers drew down their shutters, and the National Highway was deserted. But by 4 o'clock the streets in the city came along with a surging flow of singing, slogans-shouting, men, women and children holding aloft red flags, saluting the LDF State Govt, and condemning the evil forces thirsting for India's blood. They marched to and along the Highway, linking hands. Within seconds they had formed human walls, in many places, four and five rows thick.

People began to arrive in hundreds of thousands, in small and big jathas, from interior places to participate in the chain. In this thrilling atmosphere the chain was formed and came to life exactly at 10.00 PM along with the National Highway from Kaliyakkavila to Mancheswaram, 760 km long. In one voice rose the pledge that they, as the inheritors of India, would stand sentinel over this stately and glorious edifice, defend and conserve it, and never allow any force to break it.

Leading personalities from the Government, political parties and all walks of life, led by EMS Namboodiripad took part in the human chain.

Maharashtra : On October 29, just a day before the communal D-Day forced upon the nation by the VHP-BJP-RSS combine, a remarkable 'Ekata Yatra' was organised in Bombay by various trade unions, other organisations and cultural groups under the banner of the 'Ekata Samiti'. The 'Ekata Yatra', in every way a clear contrast to BJP 'Rath Yatra' coursed a distance of nearly 20 km, starting from Dadar in the heart of the city and culminating at Saki Naka near Andheri in the western suburbs of Bombay, this taking one whole day. A few months back, a similar 40 km communal Harmony March had been organised from Azad Maidan in South Bombay which had culminated in the adjoining district centre of Thane.

Apart from the nationwide communal cauldron over Ayodhya and its political implications, another feature which heightened public interest in the Yatra, was the fact that the Shiv Sena had organised a public meeting in Bombay just the day before, on Oct. 28, where Bal Thackeray had poured out communal venom in full measure.

From 8 am activists of the CITU, AITUC, UTUC, HMS, Sarva Shramik Sangh, IFTU, the JMS, BMF, DYFI, SFI, AIYF, AISF, Mumbi Rahiwasi Mahasangh, Jaagar and other cultural groups converged at Dadar T. T. The truck at the head of Yatra was decorated with banners proclaiming communal amity and national unity, and on either side

were large portraits of martyrs Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Shukhdev. Among those who flagged off the Yatra were Ekata Samiti President Asghar Ali Engineer, Convenor Pushpa Mehta, Progressive cine artist A. K. Hangal, dramatist Vijay Tendulkar, CPI (M) Central Committee Member Ahilya Rangnekar, CITU State General Secretary K. L. Bajaj, CPI (M) Bombay Committee Secretary Mahendra Singh, CPI and AITUC leaders L. S. Karkhanis, Tara Reddy, G.V. Chitnis and others.

The Yatra culminated in a large public meeting at Saki Naka, which was attended by several thousand people.

West Bengal : Innumerable rallies, marches and street corner meetings were held in West Bengal, in the campaign to maintain communal harmony, rallying people from all walks of life.

The campaign began with a central rally convened by the West Bengal Left Front at Sidhu Kanu Dahar on October 23. The rally was addressed by leaders of the constituent parties of Left Front. Jyoti Basu pointed out that the fundamentalists have now joined hands to topple the Central regime. West Bengal has the tradition of resisting communal tensions, and here thousands of Sikhs were protected after the assassination of Indira Gandhi.

On October 29, Left-led trade unions and the 12th July Committee jointly organised a rally at Calcutta. Students, teachers, researchers and employees of Calcutta University marched through the streets appealing for communal harmony. October 30 was marked by a Human Chain throughout the State.

Bihar : At Patna, a huge 'Sadbhavana March' was taken out to the State Assembly building on October 29. The march, joined by a large number of people from various strata, moved through the main thoroughfares covering a distance of six kms. The march was conducted by left and secular political parties. After hailing the arrest of L. K. Advani at Samastipur, the speakers expressed satisfaction that the spread of communal virus has been largely contained in the State. They urged upon the toiling sections and the intelligentsia to move into action to foil the game of communal forces.

On 30th October, the Central Trade Union organisations, Service Associations and other democratic mass organisations of the state held a meeting at the CITU State Committee Office at Patna and expressed deep concern at the communal tension created by the BJP-VHP Bajrang Dal—RSS combine which has resulted in communal flare ups in Jamshepur, Ranchi, Dhanbad and Hazaribagh. The meeting extended its full support to the steps taken by the V. P. Singh Govt. at the Centre and Bihar and U.P. Govt. to contain this communal frenzy which is threatening the integrity and unity

of the country.

The meeting urged upon the working class to defeat the sinister move of the communal forces which is intended to divide the unity of working class as well, and protect the unity of the country.

The trade unions, service Associations and other organisations held a rally the next day at 5:00 in the evening at Gandhi Maidan and expressed their firm resolve to foil the dirty designs of the RSS-VHP-BJP combine and safeguard the nation's unity with all their might. A pamphlet was also issued on behalf of the Trade Unions to the people of the State cautioning them about the dangerous designs of the communal forces and urging upon them to remain alert and foil this game.

Tripura : Right at the dot of 1:15 PM the people of Tripura also joined hands with the chain of friendship (Maitri Bandhan) extended throughout the nation on 30th October. At the call of 11 left and secular youth and student organisations people from all walks of life and all religions joined this human chain. Thousands of people have taken pledge, joining hand in hand, to safeguard the unity and integrity of the country to maintain unity and communal amity and above all to defeat the conspirators who are out to take the nation to the brink of catastrophe. Agartala, Sonamura, Melaghar, Kailashahar, Udaipur and in fact from all part of the State the people joined this human chain in thousands and expressed their resolve to challenge the forces of disunity.

Reports of rallies and other form of mass action from Raigarh in Madhya Pradesh, Udaipur in Rajasthan, Paradip in Orissa and many other places are coming in.

Statement by Central TU's

In the meantime, the Central Trade Union Organisations, viz. CITU, AITUC, HMS, UTUC, TUCC and UTUC(LS) has issued the following statement on 1st November, 1990.

The Central Trade Unions, viz. CITU, AITUC, HMS, UTUC, TUCC and UTUC(LS) condemn the attempt of the BJP, VHP, RSS, Bajrangdal, etc. to demolish the Babri Masjid at Ayodhya, and warmly congratulate the Mulyam Singh Government of UP for successfully thwarting their violent attempts, under extremely adverse circumstances with the minimum casualties.

The violent manner in which the BJP, VHP, RSS, Bajrangdal, etc. stormed the cordoned area and tried to destroy the dome of the Masjid exposed their real intension to demolish it and the canard spread by them to have started the Kar Seva is to create an unprecedented communal flare up in the whole country. The nefarious game played by these rabid communal forces to impose Hindu supermacy and divide the country with communal polarisation and thereby subverting the secular fabric of the Constitution and the country, portends dangerous consequences for the Indian people. When the country is already confronted with the secessionist

activities in Punjab, Kashmir and Assam, the communal game played by these organisations will only make the country a breeding ground for the imperialist forces to destabilise it.

We further congratulate the National Front Government at the Centre for remaining firm on principles to safeguard the secular character of the country and not to make any compromise with the BJP. We remain firm on the opinion that the issue is to be settled either through negotiations or by accepting the court verdict. The trade unions warn that any move with a view to making any compromise with the BJP and VHP on the construction of the Ram temple by demolishing the Babri Masjid or shifting it, will be unitedly opposed by the working class and appeal to the National Front to remain firm on principles at this juncture, which overrides all other considerations to safeguard the unity and integrity of the country.

We warmly congratulate the people of UP and the trade unions and all other mass organisations for rising up to the occasion and demonstrating their unprecedented unity by participating in the massive human chain programme all over the country on 30th October and observing the week preceding it for communal harmony, and call upon them to further consolidate the working class unity and carry forward the struggle to isolate these divisive forces and safeguard the unity and integrity of the country.

(From page 11)

- table etc.
5. Use of Geo-Jute on wider scale to protect soil, particularly the embankment of rivers/seas etc.
 6. No wage cut by the employers.
 7. Arrangement to make payment of all arrears of P.F., E.S.I., Bonus, Wage and Gratuity etc.
 8. No edible material should be allowed to be packed in synthetic bags including medicines etc.
 9. Effective legislation to realise all dues and exemplary punishment including confiscation of private properties of the owners and directors and adequate provision to check its recurrence.
 10. BIFR : It is revealed that the functioning of BIFR is mainly anti-working class. It has no technical expertise and depends on the IDBI, IFCI, ICICI. These financial institutions hire the private consultants to prepare the so-called revival packages/proposals suggesting anti-workers steps, such as wage cuts, reduction of compliments etc etc. If it is not accepted by the workers, it passes orders for liquidation of the mills. Hence, its working pattern must be changed in the interest of industry and as well as workers.

Yours sincerely,
(Mohammed Amin)
General Secretary

Bengal Chatkal Mazdoor Union (CITU)

Atrocities Against Women and Girl Child

—Kumudini Behera, Orissa.

The essence of situation today in our country is that the common innocent people are being masacred daily by the reactionary, and fundamentalists secessionist, terrorism under the capitalistic-land lord rule. The atrocities against women is one of the burning problem in the existing society of India as well as in Orissa. The ever increasing violence committed against women and all age group now become a day today feature of our national life. In our society women are exploited in many ways. The incidents around it such as dowry, death, rape, wife-beating, female, feticide, prostitution, molestation, eve-teasing tortures, cruelty and humiliation which figure in media and official reports taken to gether constitute only a tip of the Iceberg. The main responsibility of poor and middle class women are to take care of their children and look after their home and family members. They solely depend on males for their livelihood they are financially dependent on males. In a male dominating society females are deprived of getting higher education and no scope for increasing social consciousness. The main reason for women exploitation is the existence of present social system unless we change the social system the atrocities against women cannot be lessened. So the first and foremost duty is to change this system.

The country has passed through forty three years of independence but the women still are not independent. The age old anti-culture, blind beliefs and male pre-dominated society, tortured them very much. The society in which women are tortured, neglected in each step, far placed from responsibility, that society cannot be termed as civilised and developed. Lenin once said that "If women do not have entry in to the general administration services, defence arrangements and political life of the country and buged inside the four walls of home and kitchens then independency in true sense has not been achieved." Let the socialism be kept aside. It will be presumed that the society has not achieved democracy.

In our country it is known that the democratic movement is very poor and the women participation is also negligible. Besides our own social problems, we have to participate in democratic movement to a greater extent. In a class divided society besides innumerable problems of the working class there are certain specific problems of the working women. In general the workers have to fight against the Govt. and the owners to achieve their demands like wage, bonus, DA, house rent allowance etc. Which does not cover their entire requirements and problems. Along with the above problems there are certain most important requirements such as maternity benefit, creche, equal pay for equal work and fighting against certain insulting terms and conditions in the place of appointments. In addition to that, as a woman she has her own family problems. In this

bourgeois landlord administration the conditions of working women are very pathetic. Even though there are provisions for equal pay for equal work, motherhood is a sacred right, equal right on property etc. in our constitution but in reality women are deprived of their rights.

It is a fact that our state is backward in education, employment and extending other facilities. The total literacy is about 34 percent. Employment of women is less than 21 percent. Though there is increase in employment of women but at a very slow rate. In the agricultural field more 77 percent women are working. As they are unorganised, and illiterate, they are getting low wage in comparison to male workers. They remain unemployed more than six months during a year. Due to modernisation and application of new machinery and skill, the women are thrown out of employment. They have no job security at all no creche facility, no kindergarten facility and no hostel facility. Weak trade union movement and inactiveness of labour force is another cause of women exploitation.

In a bourgeois society the female workers are getting lower wage than male workers though the nature of work is same. Except Govt. institutions each and every field there exists wage differentiation between male and female. In leather factory, construction work, stone breaking work and in the field of agriculture there is wage discrimination against women though the work load is same. Equal remuneration Act. is not implemented properly.

Dowry system is also another reason of violence against women. It is a social evil. It cannot be eradicated by slogans or propaganda. Though the Govt. has formulated "Dowry" Prohibition Act. during the year 1961, it is only in papers. Unless general awareness is created in the society dowry system cannot be abolished, and the miseries of the women cannot be lessened.

No doubt, loud concerns were expressed by political leaders, Govt. agencies and social workers against this deep rooted social malady since the days of freedom struggle. In the post independence period the first comprehensive treatment of women's issues was taken up by committee for states of women in India (1971) which in its voluminous report entitled 'towards equality'. (1975) has inter alia recommended a radical review of the then existing legislations with a view to mitigate the violence against women-folk. The international decade for women (1975-85) witnessed a boost to move for improvement of condition of women. In the recent past the national perspective plan for women (1982-2000), report of the National Expert Committee on women prisoners and the shramshakti, report of the national Commission of Self-Employed Women and women in

informal sector have already stimulated a fresh spate of healthy countrywide debate around the question of unequal and insecure position of women in a democratic polity like India.

In the society not only women but also girl child is exploited in many ways. Girl children are working in the field of agriculture, factories and their number is increasing day by day. In a decade from 1971 to 1981 the male child in India is 8 percent where as the girl child is 30 percent. But in Orissa male child is 10 percent and female child is 79 percent. Again the girls belonging to the age group from 15 to 19 are victims of rape, molestation, and physical torture in educational institutions, work sites, streets cinema houses and public places. Special efforts should be made to mitigate the oppression on girl child through suitable legislative provisions and voluntary action.

Some of the important legislations that have already been affected to tackle the violence against women are as follows :

1. Criminal Law : Act 1983 gave legal recognition to domestic violence by making cruelty inflicted by the husband or his relatives an offence.

2. Law of Evidence : This law was also amended to provide if a married woman commits suicide within seven years of her marriage the presumption in law will be that her husband and his relatives abetted the suicide.

3. Law on Rape : On the recommendation of 84th Report of Law Commission the criminal law amendment was passed in 1983 which provides for protection of the victims from the glare of publicity during investigation and trial, change in definition of rape to remove the element of consent, addition of the crime of custodial rape, enhancement of punishment for the crime and shifting of onus of proof in to the accused.

4. Commission of Sati Prevention Act : was formulated during the year 1987.

5. Dowry prohibition Act : (1961) It was amended in 1984 and again in 1986 to make the provision of this law more stringent to plug the loop holes which had made it ineffective.

6. Family Courts Act, 1984 was passed in order to provide a forum in which family disputes would be resolved in an atmosphere of reconciliation and understanding keep the advocate out and provide for counsellors to assist the judge. But unfortunately this act is implemented only in three states.

7. Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1986 : The suppression of Immoral Traffic in women and girls Act 1956 was amended in 1978 and reamended the renamed in 1986 as Immoral Traffic Prevention Act. The Act applicable to both men and women provides for more stringent penalties particularly for defences against children and minors.

8. Abortion : The medical termination of Pregnancy Act 1971 gives any women the right to abortion. But some parents are taking steps for killing female child in the womb by getting the prenatal sex determination tests. This is a shameless thing. So Maharashtra Govt. has passed regulation of use of prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act 1988 to ban such tests.

9. Indecent Representation of Women : Prohibition Act was also formulated during the year 1986.

Though many law have been formulated by the Govt. for preventing the miseries of the women and protecting their rights but actually the laws are not properly implemented.

Suggestions : The following steps may please be taken to mitigate the violence against women folk.

1. A uniform central legislation to be passed along the lines of Maharashtra Regulation of Use of prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act 1988.

2. Protective homes and corrective institutions for prostitutes and misguided women to be opened in adequate number involving the voluntary organisations.

3. Adultery should be regarded as a matrimonial offence not a criminal offence as at present. The Sec. 497 of IPC confers upon husband the right to prosecute the adulterer of his wife while it does not confer any right upon the wife to prosecute the woman with whom her husband has committed adultery, The IPC should amended to confer the said right to wife.

4. Implementing and monitoring machinery down to grsss root level to be tightened to deal with atrocities on women.

5. A comprehensive and objective evaluation to be made as regards the failure in implementation of Dowry prohibition Act.

6. A countrywide debate to be raised as regards the proposal for uniform civil code for all communities.

7. Family courts to be set up in every state.

8. Camps for legal awareness, legal aid, para-legal training public interest litigation and family counselling should be held in adequate number for women by voluntary organisations.

9. The national commission on women to be ratified to state, district and block levels to cope with increasing rate of atrocities on women and girl child.

B esides these the following suggestions are to be

(Cont'd on page 20)

12th Congress of The WFTU

M. K. Pandhe

The 12th Congress of the World Federation of Trade Unions held in Moscow from 13th to 20th November 1990 set at rest the propaganda launched by the ICFTU that the WFTU would be disintegrated in the Congress. All the former socialist countries in Eastern Europe except Poland decided to go out of the WFTU while the new Czech Govt has given notice to the WFTU to vacate its Headquarters from Prague. The ICFTU issued a directive to all its affiliates not to participate in the conference even as an observer. The financial position of the WFTU also became precarious due to reduction of membership in Eastern Europe. However, the deliberations of the conference resulted in survival of the WFTU despite several difficulties. Though deliberations were full of controversies, the WFTU remained united as a centre of trade union movement of all the continents.

At the 12th Congress 1079 delegates and observers participated of whom 103 were women. They represented 486 national, local, regional and international organisations from 132 countries representing more than 40 crores and 50 lakh workers. The largest contingent of delegates was from Europe with 332 participants followed by Asia and Oceania with 227 participants from 119 organisations. The participation from the American continent was 201 from 129 organisations while the African participation was 97 from 39 organisations. Twenty eight organisations with 71 participants attended from the rear and middle east.

A forty member Indian delegation participated in the Congress. The CITU was represented by M.K. Pandhe, Vimal Ranadive, P. K. Ganguly, Sunil Basu Roy and A. K. Padmanabhan. The All India State Govt Employees Federation was represented by Sukomal Sen. Ram Narayan Goswami attended the Congress on behalf of All India Kisan Sabha while the All India Agricultural Workers Union was represented by Thirunavukkarasu Soosai.

A presidium of 30 members was elected to conduct the deliberations of the Congress.

Controversial Document

The main document of the Congress entitled "Trade Union strategies for the 1990s" was drafted by a Commission specially appointed for the purpose. It raised several controversies in the Congress and several delegates criticised the basic approach of the document.

Reviewing the developments in the contemporary world the document noted "It would not be an exaggeration to say that one of the most important transformations of the 1980's was perestroika in the Soviet Union, the main objective of which was the

elimination of the interventionist administrative system and the effective and complete implementation of universally recognised human rights. This change is inextricably linked to the large scale transformations taking place in Eastern Europe which led to the establishment of new political and economic regimes".

The document did not explain why the trade unions of former socialist countries in Eastern Europe except Poland have left the WFTU and are trying to join the ICFTU.

The Eastern European governments were not just new political and economic regimes. They were unabashed attempts to subvert socialism and bring back capitalist economic system. This cannot be welcomed by the working class or the trade union movement.

The document gives at length statistics from the ILO reports and highlights the extremely poor working and living conditions of the workers in the third world countries. It gives factual information about the use of new technology by the multi-national corporations to suit their vested interests, when the capitalist system is most inhuman system and the struggle against this system is directly connected with protection of human rights of the society. However, the draft document has tried to ignore the realities of class struggle on the plea of protection of universal human values. Class struggle only protects the human values of the overwhelming majority of the toiling millions.

Another highlight of the document is the deideologisation of the trade union movement. It seeks to make the trade unions non-political and wanted the independence of the trade unions from the political parties. Without its own class ideology the workers will never be able to counteract ideological propaganda launched by the capitalist class in the trade union movement. Refusal to carry out political struggle against the capitalist class will only disarm the working class politically.

The document underestimates the machinations of imperialist powers against the third world countries. Though it mentions the World Bank and the IMF it does not sufficiently emphasises the need for sustained struggle against capitalist onslaughts. Every effort to strengthen disarmament and world peace is welcomed by the working class and the people. However, the document fails to stress the need for intensifying the struggle against imperialist machinations and for world peace. Though the T.U dialogue is welcome but its objectives should be properly spelt out.

Assertion by Third World Countries

In all 198 participants spoke on the document.

Overwhelming majority of speakers from the third world countries spoke about the need to fight against imperialism with more vigour. They also emphasised the need to strengthen the class struggle and struggle for socialism. Several speakers from capitalist countries also emphasised these aspects of trade union movement. Most of the speakers from advanced capitalist as well as the third world countries attacked the concept of market economy and pointed out the prevalent conditions in their countries to highlight what market economy means to the working class and the people of these countries. Speakers from Asia, Africa and Latin America pointed out how imperialists and monopoly capitalists have developed vested interest in keeping the third world countries backward and perpetrate exploitation of the workers in these countries. On behalf of the CITU M. K. Pandhe criticised the shortcomings of the document and suggested necessary improvements. Vimal Ranadive spoke on the problems of working women in India. Sukomal Sen spoke on the question of T. U. rights and need to fight for socialism. R. N. Goswami opposed the concept of market economy which only brings capitalism through the backdoor. T. Sovsai explained the plight of agricultural workers in India and how they have been resisting the exploitation unitedly.

Trade union leaders from Cuba, China, Vietnam, DPRK, Japan affirmed their conviction in socialist ideals and stressed that only by relying on socialism that the faster social advance is possible. Some representatives of TUIs were also critical of the approach taken in the main document. Representative from Poland was particularly strong in his criticism of the document.

Representatives from U. K., Australia, New Zealand etc appealed for common action with ICFTU and asked for initiative by the WFTU to open a dialogue on the problems faced by the working class all over the world.

Representatives from 'independent' trade unions of Lithuania and Georgia of Soviet Union criticised the policy of the Govt of USSR and called for struggle against the Govt's policies. The speaker from Lithuania compared the problem of the State with the problem in Palestine or Kuwait indicating aggression on their territory by the Soviet Govt. They openly proclaimed their association with ICFTU affiliates.

The trend during the discussion could be easily seen from the fact that more than 140 speakers ie 70 per cent were from third world countries who clearly wanted a determined struggle against imperialism which was also endorsed by some speakers from developed capitalist countries.

Work of Commissions

The Congress had 4 separate Commissions which were open to all the participants. They were:

1. Development and International Economic

Co-operation.

2. Technology, Employment and Training.
3. Peace, Disarmament and Conversion.
4. Trade Union Rights.

The delegation from CITU, All India Kisan Sabha, All India Agricultural Workers Union and All India State Govt. Employees Federation participated in all the Commission meetings and contributed in the deliberations. Except the first commission all the others had only one sitting and issues were discussed at length. However, no conclusions could be drawn. The report of the commissions could not be circulated to the delegates and were read out in the congress for information of the delegates. If more sessions of commissions would have been held then perhaps it would have helped in evolving common understanding on the issues. One good feature of the discussion was that the delegates from developing countries were more assertive about their problems and the attacks they were facing at the hands of multinational corporations, world bank and the IMF.

Support To Liberation Movements :

The Conference adopted 35 resolutions, many of which were expressing solidarity with the liberation movements in Asia, Africa and Latin America. There was heated debate on the resolution on Gulf crisis. The draft resolution was not categorical about the role of US imperialists in the Gulf crisis and there was clear cut demand of withdrawal of US troops. The amendments moved by the CITU and others were accepted by the Congress. Similarly, in an appeal issued to the working class of the world the anti-imperialist thrust was weak. The CITU moved amendments on these issues which were also accepted by the Congress. Similarly CITU amendments on the resolution on migrant labour, women workers, Indian Ocean as a zone of peace were accepted by the Congress. On certain crucial issues there was voting in the Congress and overwhelming majority was generally in favour of strengthening the anti-imperialist aspects of the resolutions. This was no doubt a positive aspect in the Congress.

The Congress appealed to the president of Czechoslovakia to review his decision to vacate the WFTU headquarters at Prague.

A special meeting on the problems of working women was held during the congress which pressed the need for more emphasis to be given to the work among working women by the WFTU.

The Congress elected a new General Council and the Secretariat with Ibrahim Zakaria as the president and A. Zharikov as the General Secretary.

The 12th Congress of the WFTU highlighted the need for continuation of this world organisation as a militant international T. U. organisation based on the principle of anti-imperialism, class struggle,

Socialism and world peace. The rising struggles of the working class all over the world needs international cooperation and solidarity to fight against capitalist exploitation. If the WFTU fulfils this need it will have a bright future during 1990's, despite the vile attempts of the imperialist forces all over the world, to disrupt the unity of the working class through their agents and accomplices.

Speech By Com. M. K. Pandhe

Comrade Chairman and Delegates,

On behalf of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions I take this opportunity to convey our warm greetings to all the delegates to this Congress. We are grateful to the WFTU for extending invitation to our organisation to this Congress and giving us the opportunity to express our views on various issues facing the T. U. movement in the world today. We are also grateful to the General Confederation of Soviet Trade Unions for the warm hospitality extended to us during the Congress.

Since the Eleventh Congress of the WFTU several significant developments have taken place in the world. Though there has been relaxation in international tension, the imperialists, particularly U. S. imperialist have been resorting to several machinations to subvert peace in the world. The shameless support to racist regime in South Africa despite UN sanctions, the reckless military intervention in Panama, the open armed assistance given to counter-revolutionary rebels in Nicaragua, the support to the brutal repression against the heroic struggle of the people of Palestine are there for everyone to see. The conspiracy to advocate the theory of two Koreas to oppose the struggle of the Korean people for unification of fatherland, the U. S. conspiracies against the heroic people of socialist Cuba, the continuation of U. S. military bases all over the world are examples of U. S. aggrandisement. The Bush administration has not yet given up its star war project.

The entire world condemned the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait and demanded withdrawal of Iraqi troops but the U. S imperialists promptly sent over 400,000 troops to Saudi Arabia making the peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis difficult. It would therefore be totally wrong to consider that cold war has become a matter of past. Therefore TU movement during the ninties will have to intensify their struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism in order to preserve peace. Unfortunately the document before the Congress grossly underestimates the role of imperialism. As a matter of fact the word imperialism is missing in the document.

The development in Eastern European countries have resulted in a serious setback to the world revolutionary movements. Though in these countries serious distortions had occurred in Socialist construction which required corrective measures by launching struggle against bureaucratism, by strengthening socialist democracy etc, however, the solution

did not lie in subverting socialism and restoring capitalism. We do not see developments in Eastern Europe as attempts to restore democratic norms or struggle against authoritarian Governments or for a social renewal. What has happened is simply a counter revolution.

In the name of introduction of market economy capitalist norms of production are being established in these countries. Naturally unemployment, withdrawal of social security, closure of units, privatisation of industrial enterprises have become the order of the day. We are also concerned with the further deterioration in the economic situation in USSR after the introduction of perestroika, we are also worried at the attempt to denigrate the glorious history of USSR and its achievements. In the name of glasnost avowed anti-socialist counter revolutionary ideas are being projected openly. The proletarian internationalism has become a casualty today.

The Third World countries have experienced for several decades what the market economy means to their standard of living. Production is meant for individual profit and not for social good. The multinational companies take full advantage of the market mechanism which is responsible for people's poverty, hunger and destitution. Without strengthening class struggle against exploitation, the third world countries will not be able to take measures to improve the standard of living of the masses.

In capitalist countries modern technology is being used not to improve the quality of life of the toiling people but to intensify the exploitation of the workers. Hence without taking stringent action against multi-national corporations the fruits of modern technology cannot be enjoyed by the common people in the third world countries.

The working class today is becoming more and more conscious politically and realising that without determined political struggle against capitalism it cannot play a leading role in socialist transformation of the society. Under these circumstances we should welcome the workers joining political parties advocating working class ideology.

We agree that trade unions should not be mere appendages of political parties and their autonomy should be respected. But that should not mean that they should be independent of political parties. There is a danger that it may be interpreted to make trade unions non-political, leaving political issues for the capitalist class to decide. Therefore we are sorry to note that we do not agree with this aspect of the document. We, however, feel that despite political and ideological differences within the T.U. movement we can come together on a common platform. My organisation has proposed the formation of Confederation of Indian Trade Unions so that organisational unity in the trade union movement can be built up on common issues facing the working class.

Regional co-operation in today's world is extremely important to strengthen the trade union movement. However, merely adopting pious declarations in regional meetings without any follow-up action only make these meetings a ritual without development of grass root level organisation. Involvement of genuine mass organisations of workers in these regional meetings is extremely important. We have much to do in this area if we have to build up powerful regional movements in defence of the working class. The question of development of independent economy, struggle against MNCs, the question of improvement in the living standards of the working class, the struggle against unemployment, the struggle against discriminatory treatment to women, the question of health, safety and environment, the struggle for TU and democratic rights, solidarity with national liberation and anti-imperialist movements—these are some of the areas in which the regional co-operation on a broadest possible basis should be developed.

The trade union movement in India is faced with the problem of capitalist path of development, which is leading to more and more dependence on MNC's. The World Bank and IMF are imposing humiliating conditions for loans. The oil crisis in the Gulf is imposing crushing financial burden on the economy in addition to the problem of over 100,000 migrant Indian workers in Kuwait. The grip of Indian big business houses and the landlords over the economy is on the rise. The rural and urban unemployment in India now exceeds 100 millions. The absence of genuine land reforms has increased landlessness of peasants adding to their poverty conditions. The sky rocketing inflation in the economy is reducing real earnings of workers. The sickness and closures of over 200,000 industrial units is assuming alarming proportions. The unsafe working conditions, growing health hazards due to pollution have made the matters worse. The working class of India is unitedly resisting these attacks.

However, the communal and divisive forces in the country are trying to disrupt working class unity which is even threatening unity of the country. The U.S. imperialists are arming military regime in Pakistan to perpetuate tension in Indian sub-continent. The situation in Punjab has been aggravated due to imperialist interference in the internal affairs of our country. The separatists in Assam are also getting material assistance from imperialist forces. To fight against these machinations a massive united convention was held in India recently against communalism and divisive forces which generated great enthusiasm among the workers.

The people of India warmly welcomed Comrade Nelson Mandela when he visited India recently and expressed their solidarity with the struggle against apartheid.

The left front Govt. in West Bengal and left and democratic front Govt. in Kerala have expressed full support to the working class in their struggle for improving the standard of living of the workers and

the people.

Dear Comrades and friends,

We are confident that the working class of the world will march forward towards the cherished goal of socialism despite some serious set back in Europe. The superiority of the socialist system over the capitalist system is bound to assert in the long run. We strongly feel that any international T.U. dialogue must be based on the struggle against imperialism and neo-colonialism, for social progress and socialism, for disarmament and world peace. Fight against alien class ideology and strengthening of class struggle will alone unify the working class all over the world.

We hope the WFTU will give due consideration to these views while finalising the strategies for the last decade of this century. We are sure the WFTU will have a bright future if it rises to the occasion and fulfil these tasks with firm determination.

I Wish all success to the Congress.

- Down with imperialist machinations all over the world !
- Long live the struggle for socialism and proletarian internationalism.
- Long live the struggle for disarmament and for world peace !
- Workers of the world unite !

(From page 16)

taken into consideration.

1. Law should be formulated regarding joint right on property.

2. Right to work should be a fundamental right, and 8 hours work per day should be strictly followed.

3. Equal pay for equal work. No partiality in the field of promotion, training and treatment.

4. Existing labour laws and other laws should be corrected and improved.

5. Working women should be provided facilities of creche and kindergarten. In this regard proper laws should be implemented and strictly followed.

6. Maternity benefit should be provided for a period of four months along with the financial benefit of Rs. 500/- during pre and post delivery period.

6. Proper representation of women in all bodies should be ensured.

If our Govt take effective steps to implement the above suggestions then violence against women can be eradicated. This is one face of the coin while strong legal remedies are badly needed to stop atrocities on women and girl child in general so also a general public awareness at all level of social life should get priority. This respectability of women in our present day society must be restructured to save the country as a whole from degeneration and decay.

Trade Union Delegation to UK

Tapan Sen

A trade union delegation consisting of Com. Tapan Sen and Singaravelu from CITU had gone to UK for a study visit sponsored by Commonwealth Trade Union Council. Four other representatives from INTUC and HMS were also in the visiting team. The delegation stayed at UK from 1st to 19th October, 1990 and had met trade union leadership of various industries.

In UK, there is only one National Trade Union Centre-Trade Union Congress to which most of the trade unions of different industries are affiliated. Trade Union Congress are being funded by the Govt for carrying on Trade union education programme. The CTUC Co-ordinator told us that till date the Govt has not intervened in the matter of devising the syllabus of such TU education programme, which is being done by the TUC alone. There are colleges for TU education and in some academic colleges also there are separate department of TU education, where tutors are also being appointed by TUC. Trade union representatives from different industries are being sent to these colleges for undergoing trade union education courses of different levels and they are being sponsored by their respective unions for attending such education courses and in general they are being granted paid leave by their employers. Although very recently there are some instances where some employers are showing reluctance in granting such facilities for trade union education.

Usually in such education courses, the methodology, procedure and technique of tackling grievances in the shop floor level and mode of interaction with the management at different level are being dealt with. Also there are courses on trade union legislations compensation rules, problems of new technology, health and safety etc.

Number of affiliates union under British TUC is 78 with a total membership of 8.4 million. Over a period of last ten years, trade union membership marked a sharp decline from 12 million to 8.4 million in 1990. The same trend is noticeable in all major industries like, steel, coal, textile, engineering etc. The reasons are attributed to the introduction of new technology and closure of factories and production units. In coal industry alone, the number of coalpits being operated under British coal has gone down from 170 to 69 only during 1985-90 stated to be for imported coal being cheaper than that indigenously produced. Some more coal pits are being contemplated to be closed down by the authorities.

A notable feature in the industrial scene of UK which has posed a serious problem before the British and flexible employment. Number of home workers are also increasing and a part of jobs erstwhile being done in the industrial establishments are being unloaded to such homeworkers through some kind of job contract. Induction of new technology, wide

spread use of personal computers have set this process in motion. Major section of such part time workers are female workers and totally denied of all welfare facilities. The trade unions and still now, they are outside the trade union movement enabling the employers to manoeuvre the trade union movement enabling the employers to manoeuvre the trade union movement.

The British industrial world has now been passing through frenzy of privatisation. The process of privatisation of entire steel industry which has been under govt control is already complete accompanied by complete closure of a big number of steel mills. Water supply has also been privatised and contemplation is going on fast to privatise the power industry. Shares of the public company are being released to workers at concessional rates. But it was also observed that the workers who had purchased the share are not holding shares and rather selling it out for speculative purpose and in that process shares of a public sector company are moving to the hands of different Corporate houses, financial institutions of private sector. Notable is that the entire trade union movement has practically allowed the move of privatisation to proceed without any material hindrances except some formal protests that too not in all the cases. Even the stand of the main opposition party of UK the labour party is not clear on the move of privatisation of public sector units. This trade union delegation had the opportunity of meeting number of labour party leaders of different regions and also the municipal commissioners from that party, where Labour Party's stand on privatisation was enquired about specifically. The Labour Party leaders replied evasively on this question.

The heroic strike action of the British Coal miners had been conducted with limitations and vascillation by the British TU leaders. Whereas the rulers let loose all sorts of atrocities including declaring the strike illegal and banning monetary support no solidarity action was organised by the TU leaders at national level. Still in certain regions solidarity actions were organised in support of this historic Coal Miner's strike. Support group involving workers and their family even was formed who even joined the Picket alongwith the Coal Miners' in many places. But these were the phenomenon in certain regions only generated by the initiative some radical regional leaders, and was not enough to counteract effectively against the atrocious attack on the striking coal miners by the entire state machinery.

Still the coal miners strike was the most historic event of militant trade union action in the face of active opposition of the state machinery. Strike failed, and the entire work force in the coal industry was sliced to almost one third consequent upon closure of pits which gained momentum after the failure of the strike.

All India Convention of Public Sector Workers and Working Women at Bangalore—19-21 Dec '90

Swadesh Deveroye

The preparation for the All India Conventions of Public Sector workers and Working Women to be held at Bangalore from 19th to 21st December '90 is going ahead with full vigour. The Reception Committee constituted with Com. S. Sooryanarayan Rao and Com. V.J.K. Nair as Chairman and General Secretary respectively is working round the clock to make the convention a grand success. It may be recalled that the first convention which decided to form the All India Co-ordination Committee was held at Bangalore itself during May, 1985.

According to information received at the head-quarter, apart from the CITU unions a large number of unions having no affiliation with any central trade unions will also be sending delegates for the convention. Moreover the National Confederation of Public Sector Officers Associations is also expected to attend the convention as fraternal delegate.

Among the major issues before the convention are the danger of privatisation, economic issues concerning the Public Sector workers and organisational questions.

The question of privatisation has assumed seriousness with the fresh move of the Central Govt. to allow the monopoly Capital and multinational companies to enter the core sectors of our industry. The Steel, Power, Oil, Fertilizer etc. have been made target of attack. Move is also afoot to hand over some Public Sector industries to the Private Sector including the process of selling out shares to the private owners. The new Industrial Policy if given effect would open the doors for the Private capital to penetrate into areas earmarked for the Small Scale Industries and for Public Sector. The new policy also contains decision for liberalisation by doing away with licensing system, automatic equity clearance for foreign capital etc. The sum total of the aforesaid steps would only further endanger our self-reliance and denigrate the Public Sector.

On the economic question D.A. rate, ceilings on entitlement and maximum amount of bonus, Pension Scheme, raising of Income Tax exemption limit are most important issues for the Public Sector workers which are pending unsettled for more than a year.

Moreover the next round of wage negotiations are also almost due. The tenure of many Public Sector wage agreements will be expiring in the coming year and negotiations have to be started before six months of expiry. Hence the strategy for the negotiations is also an issue before the convention.

Finally the Co-ordination Committee has tra-

velled a long way since its formation five and half year back. During this period it has played most vital role in shaping the movement of the Public Sector workers. It could not have been possible to wage the struggles including strike action launched by the workers during this period through which many economic demands including successful wage settlements could be achieved without the initiative of the Co-ordination Committee. Further it played a crucial role in stalling the implementation of the notorious Arjun Sengupta Committee report. All these have earned lot of confidence and respect of the workers for the Committee.

The task before us is how to convert the confidence of the workers into a militant organisation to fulfil its political responsibility to lead the working class movement. This is all the more necessary on the face of the critical political situation of the country.

Delegates to the Public Sector Workers Convention at Bangalore—19-21 Dec '90

1. The venue for the convention and delegate camp Sri Vasavi Dharmashala located at South Bangalore near famous Lalbagh Gardens and is about 5 K.M. from the Bangalore City Railway Station.
2. The conventions will start from 10.00. Hence the delegates should reach Bangalore accordingly.
3. Bangalore will be quite chill in the month of December and hence the delegates should bring winter garments.
4. Alongwith lodging the Reception Committee will make the arrangement for food also for which the delegates will have to pay Rs. 50/- each.
5. Delegates reaching in advance and likely to stay beyond 21st Dec '90 should inform the Reception Committee earlier enabling them to make due arrangement.
6. For return reservation send money with details immediately. Also inform date, time and train of arrival to the Reception Committee.

Address of the Reception Committee :

Centre of Indian Trade Unions,
Karnataka State Committee
95 II Cross
Muneswara Block,
Palace Guttahalli
Bangalore—560 003
Phone : 366489

International Meeting of Trade Unions

The 45th Founding Anniversary of the Workers Party of Korea was celebrated on 10th October 1990 at Pyongyang. On this occasion the leaders of various political parties, trade union and other mass organisations world over were invited. CITU was also invited and as per the decision of the Secretariat Com. Chittabrata Majumdar, W. C. Member, West Bengal attended. The Central Committee of the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea taking advantage of the occasion had taken initiative to convene an International Meeting of the Trade Unionists "for the peace and disarmament in the Korean Peninsula" from October 11-12 1990 in Pyongyang. Trade unionists of the various countries of the world participated in the meeting and adopted an "Appeal" to the workers and trade unions all over the World". We are printing the appeal here.—Editor.

Appeal

Workers and trade unions the world over who love justice and truth, and struggle actively to attain the global peace and a genuine socio-economic development.

We, the representatives of trade unions with different international affiliations from the five continents of the world, have adopted this appeal in the "International Meeting of Trade Unionists for Peace and Disarmament on the Korean Peninsula" held in Pyongyang, the capital of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

It is the common aspiration of trade unions and workers around the world to realize peace and disarmament and bring about the socio-economic development for the masses of working people.

Today, in the international arena the process of disarmament and detente is gaining momentum and the once divided countries and nations are turning to reunification, the reality of which was born of the struggle of the toiling masses and people to build an independent new world, war-free, peaceful and prosperous.

Unexceptionally in the Korean peninsula, too, the pro-peace and pro-reunification movement is mounting on unprecedented scale.

Breaking fresh ground in the Korean history of division lasting for nearly half a century, the Pan-National Rally for peace and reunification of the country was held in a grand manner in Panmujom with the active involvement of many thousands of Korean representatives from the north, the south and abroad, and the north-south high-level talks are

under way in the highlights of the world public opinion.

We consider that these goings-on are conducive to peace and the peaceful reunification in the Korean peninsula.

No forces must attempt to quell the efforts of the Korean people for peace, detente and reunification.

Today on the Korean peninsula, however, the military confrontation persists and the arms race is continuously in high gear and the conspiracy to fix the partition of Korea, under the cover of the "dialogue", is brewing up in a dangerous phase. It is the US and some pro-US forces in South Korea that should be held accountable.

At present the 40,000 strong US troops are entrenched and various types of 1,000 odd US nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles are deployed in the Southern part of Korea.

Far from being satisfied with it, the United States, under the misleading signboard of "arms cutback", is trying the whole bag of tricks to introduce more nuclear-capable fighter bombers and the ultramodern war hardwares into south Korea and, at the same time, is staging in succession simulated nuclear war exercises against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

As a result, the Korean peninsula is exposed to the ever-growing danger of war, which gravely endangers peace in Asia and the rest of the world.

Under the given situation where the international relations tend to grow more interdependent, the possible outbreak of a war on the Korean peninsula hemmed in by the Asian continent will undoubtedly expand into a global thermo-nuclear war, driving billions of lives into this nuclear catastrophe.

Recognising that struggle for peace, disarmament and reunification on the Korean peninsula is the international duty of all peace-loving forces of the world and the right task for the labour movement itself that the international trade union movement should duly care, for we hope that the workers and labour unions all over the world will respond positively to our appeal calling for intensifying the international solidarity activities in support of the just cause of the Korean workers and people for national reunification.

What is important for peace and peaceful reunification in Korea is, first and foremost, the soonest

possible pull out of the US troops and nuclear weapons, the principal stumbling block to peace and reunification.

Taking chances, as the case may be, the trade unions and workers across the world should lay bare and denounce the ill-boding arms spiral of the United States and raise their voices to have her troops and nuclear weapons withdrawn from South Korea. We appeal to launch a worldwide signature-collection campaign of international trade unions in demand of the withdrawal of the US military from South Korea on the occasion of September 8, 1991, the day marking the 46th year of the US occupation of South Korea.

We support the peace-oriented disarmament proposal of the D.P.R.K. to reduce the armed forces in both north and south stage by stage to less than 100,000 respectively in a few year's time and, correspondingly phase out the US military stationed in South Korea and demand it be materialised as early as possible.

Only when the peaceful reunification of the country is attained, can peace in real terms be brought about on the Korean peninsula.

The trade unions and workers the world over, therefore, should be more active in their campaigns, considering the movement for solidarity with Korea's reunification as an important part of the world peace movement.

We consider that the proposal for the founding of the Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo and the new 5-point policy for national reunification, both put forward by President Kim Il Sung of the D.P.R.K. are the most fair and reasonable ideas for relaxing tension on the Korean peninsula and bring closer the independent, peaceful reunification of the country.

Failing the initiative of the International Liason Committee for Peace and Reunification of Korea (CILRECO) to designate this October, in which falls the 10th anniversary of the publication of the proposal for confederation as the "Month for Support to the Proposal for Founding the DCRK", we express our hope that the trade unions and workers in many countries will organise a variety of forms of solidarity actions to mark this month.

The trade unions and workers all over the world should reject the "two Koreans" frameup of the US and the South Korean authorities and oppose categorically the misuse of the UN arena for the purpose of legalising internationally of the Korea's division

and of delaying her reunification.

Let's render more active support and solidarity with the South Korean workers who are fighting dauntlessly for the right to labour movements, independence, democracy and reunification against the harsh crackdown of the South Korean authorities who criminalise all legitimate activities of workers under the deceptive pretext of securing the "social stability" in the face of the so-called "threat of southward invasion."

We earnestly appeal to all the workers and trade unions over the world to further strengthen solidarity with the Korean people and workers in their struggle to make their divided country into one by establishing the Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo on the three principles on independence, peaceful reunification and the great national unity.

Workers Oppose Privatisation Move

A total unity of all unions has been forged in Alangalam Cement Factory, a State Govt. undertaking in Kamarajar district of Tamilnadu.

The factory has a permanent strength of 1500 employees and 500 contract workers. Thousands of rural families around this factory are dependant for their living on the income from these workers.

Pleading that it is sick, the Tamilnadu Govt. has decided to sell the factory to private sector, or turn it into a joint sector company. The real reason is the mismanagement, corruption, and inefficiency of the management, which the State Govt. never cared to check in time. Instead of ordering an enquiry into its functioning and fixing responsibility for the state of affairs and reconstituting the management with workers' democratic participation, the State Govt. is trying to wash off its hands.

It is a most welcome development that CITU, INTUC, ADMK Union, DMK Union, J.D. Union, HMS, All India Forward Block Union have all united and resolved jointly to oppose this move for privatisation or joint sector. The united unions alongwith the public and peasants around are preparing for a serious struggle. A resolution to this effect was passed at a joint meeting of all the unions on 16-11-90.